

NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUND NO. 5-5513
GAURI HOSHI/NEW DELHI

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SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS ON THE MEND

ANNCR:

THERE'S GROWING EVIDENCE THAT INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA WILL IMPROVE IN THE COMING MONTH'S... AS WE HEAR IN THIS BACKGROUND REPORT FROM NEW DELHI BY VOA'S SOUTH ASIAN BUREAU CORRESPONDENT GAURI HOSHI.

VOICE:

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO ASIAN POWERS BEGAN IMPROVING WHEN THE NEW JANATA ADMINISTRATION ASSUMED OFFICE IN INDIA LAST MARCH. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN PEKING AND NEW DELHI WERE RESTORED TO AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL AND RECENT STATEMENTS BY CHINESE AND INDIAN LEADERS HAVE REFLECTED A FAR MORE CONCILIATORY TONE THAN AT ANY TIME DURING THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS OF COLD WAR BETWEEN THE WORLD'S TWO MOST POPULOUS NATIONS.

CHINESE VICE-PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING, SPEAKING IN KATHMANDU, TOOK NOTE OF WHAT HE TERMED THE DESIRE OF INDIA AND CHINA TO NORMALIZE THEIR RELATIONS. AND INDIAN PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI, ON TUESDAY, RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT HE IS READY TO MEET WITH ANY CHINESE LEADER IN AN EFFORT TO SPEED UP THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS IF THE CHINESE LEADERS ARE INTERESTED IN A DIALOGUE.

THE MAJOR ISSUE IMPEDING THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN NEW DELHI AND PEKING IS THE BORDER DISPUTE. MISTER DESAI HAS REITERATED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS INDIA'S CLAIM TO LARGE AREAS ON THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER, WHICH HE SAYS CHINA ANNEXED DURING THE NINETEEN SIXTY-TWO HIMALAYAN WAR. FOR THEIR PART, SOME CHINESE LEADERS HAVE HINTED UNOFFICIALLY THAT THE BORDER ISSUE IS NEGOTIABLE.

MEANWHILE, A HIGH-LEVEL CHINESE TRADE DELEGATION ARRIVED IN NEW DELHI WEDNESDAY TO VISIT THE INDIAN ENGINEERING TRADE FAIR. THE DELEGATION IS THE FIRST CHINESE TRADE TEAM TO VISIT INDIA SINCE THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER CONFLICT. LATER, THE CHINESE TRADE REPRESENTATIVES ARE SCHEDULED TO VISIT INDIAN STEEL AND HEAVY MACHINERY PLANTS TO SELECT AND PLACE ORDERS FOR INDIAN MACHINERY AND ENGINEERING GOODS.

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